



## MEETING MINUTES / 15 MAY 2018

### ATTENDANCE:

Present: Farley, Showell, Armbruster, Baldwin, Bradley, Johnson, Lardizzzone, Lopez, Magner, McMullen, Newman (telephone), Newstadt, Sarg, Seppala, and Stewart (telephone) **100%**

Absences: None

Guests: Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC), Bill Peterson (Delaware Veterans Home), Jessica Finan (Home of the Brave), Liz Byers-Jiron, Dave Skocik, Kim McMullen, Paul Davis, Nolan Lewis (NABVETS), Stephen McGuire, Gene Truono, and Peggy Marshall

### CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS:

Requested moment of silence for service members in "harm's way"

Requested a review of handout referencing the remains of indigent persons

- There is no terminology requiring DCVA notification if a veteran's remains are discovered

### MEETING MINUTES:

Approved, motions: Lardizzzone and Johnson

### ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:

#### **Wilmington VAMC – Vince Kane, Director (via telephone)**

Center's focus is to prioritize veterans' access and be the facility

- 30K veterans are engaged with a 5% growth mostly in Sussex County

Access measures are strong in primary care and behavioral health

Community Living Centers are rated "five star"

Center is looking into restoring hospice care

Dover CBOC site is working with facilities to review submitted bids for 19K square foot expansion

- Anticipate moving forward in late June

TeleHealth with Delaware Veterans Home is looking to expand beyond behavioral health treatment (Stewart) What are the hurdles for increasing Wilmington VAMC access?

Urban area veterans have other primary care options

Space is an issue, renovations are needed, and there are facility layout concerns

(Johnson) What are the wait time averages?

Unknown, can forward information to the commissioners

(McMullen) What is the status of the Georgetown radiology upgrade?

Testing equipment to determine activation date

#### **Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Bill Peterson, Director:**

73 residents

- Seeking 90 residents by June

Staffing concerns continue due to lower (than non-state) salaries

- Submitted a nurse pay increase proposal through the Department of State of Delaware

Nine residents are in the Gold Suite, four more are pending

Blue Suite renovations are upcoming

Dining Room renovation will start March 2019

Low nurse retention rates are a nationwide concern

- May impact home's overall residency numbers

**Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:**

12 male residents, 3 openings

5 female residents, 3 openings

First State Corvette Club fundraiser is 9 September, more information to follow

Seeking a contractor willing to build a gazebo at a donated or reduced cost

- \$4K or less

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Gene Truono, Former Chief Compliance Officer for Paypal

Reaching out to veterans to secure national level veteran concerns of interest

Peggy Marshall Thomas, Legislative Attorney for DE General Assembly Minority Caucus

Wishes to shape policies for veterans within Attorney General's office

- Curious if veterans' court is a good diversion program

Nolan Lewis, NABVETS

Requests participation at the WW II and Korean War veterans' ceremony at Brandywine Park on 25

May / 1400

- Would like the commission to consider co-hosting the event

Liz Byers-Jiron

Thanked everyone for supporting the female veterans tea

Stand Down flyer are available for distribution

Paul Davis

Vietnam Veterans of America (Delaware) are working with Commissioner Baldwin on fundraising initiatives

A Pearl Harbor monument will be created at Smyrna's Como Park, complete with a 2-ton anchor from naval sources

- Vietnam Veterans of America raised funds for the memorial

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Armbruster:**

Interments – 82

**Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:**

Interments – 27

**Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:**

Email about brain injury trust fund is available for review

(Showell) Can we ask DVTF applicants if they have TBI needs?

Not recommended due to HIPPA

**Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:**

No updates on commission recommendations

## **ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

Commissioner McMullen (AFSA)

Member for Life Drive

JROTC Awards Program

Capitol Hill testimonies

Attended House Veterans Affairs meeting

25 – 29 Aug: Professional Airmen's Conference, San Antonio, TX

Commissioner Armbruster (AL)

6 Apr: Attended DVH Gold Suite dedication

10 May: Conservation Tech Interview Panelist

10 – 14 Jun: Boys State, 120 participants

6 – 7 Jul: State Convention at Dover Downs

- Brett Reistad is leading National Commander Candidate

24 – 30 Aug: National Convention, Minneapolis, MN

Commissioner Bradley (AMVETS) Not present but forwarded information

Post 2 donated \$55K to Home of the Brave

- \$30K women's

- \$25K men's

Post 2 Ladies Auxiliary raised \$1K to take DVH residents to 24 June Shorebirds' baseball game

28 May: Post 2 Memorial Day Ceremony

16 Jun: State Convention at Post 2

Commissioner Lardizzone (DAV)

22 Apr: Attended New York DAV 98th Anniversary Dinner

24 Apr: Attended Friends of Veterans Home meeting

3 – 6 May: Attended Connecticut DAV State Convention

8 May: Attended Wilmington VAMC VSO meeting

9 May: Attended House Veterans Affairs Meeting

9 May: Attended DVA Blue Rocks game

14 May: Attended Veterans Home admission meeting

17 – 19 May: Departmental Convention

Commissioner Johnson (KWVA)

Trac Chair dedication, in June, at Spaulding Institute, Boston

Chapter 1 Pancake Breakfast was successful

Chapter 2 continues Rose of Sharon fundraising

18 May: Placing flags at Bear Veterans Cemetery

26 May: Chapter 2 will participate in Wilmington Memorial Day Parade

26 May: Delaware Korean American Association is sponsoring a Korean War Veterans picnic at Glasgow Park

14 Jun: Hosting Millsboro Cemetery Flag Day Ceremony

Commissioner Farley (MCL)

Attended Departmental Annual Convention

- Briefed on DCVA activities

- Re-elected Department Judge Advocate

Presented scholarship award to First State Academy JROTC cadet

Continued work with Dover Homelessness Task Force

Attended House Veterans Affairs Committee meeting

Delaware Veterans' Homelessness status  
- 762 veterans permanently housed since 2015

Commissioner Sarg (MOAA)

16 – 18 Apr: Storming the Hill (Capitol)

24 Apr: Attended Friends of Delaware Trust Fund meeting

May: JROTC presentations to five Kent County High Schools and the University of Delaware

1 and 10 May: Gold bar presentation to 35 University of Delaware ROTC graduates

9 May: Attended First State Community Partnership meeting

9 May Attended House Veterans Affairs Committee meeting

14 May: Attended Delaware Veterans Home admissions meeting

Commissioner Magner (MOPH)

19 May: Department Convention at Dover Downs

- Gary Morris to be re-elected as State Commander

9 Jun: Chapter 9377 at Acme, Lantana Square Shopping Center for viola flower donation, 1000 – 1400

19 Jun / 1000: Purple Heart Truck Run is stopping at Cabela's, Christiana Mall

- One of 35 nationwide stops ending at national convention in Spokane, WA on 30 July

Commissioner Newman (VFW)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (VVA)

POW/MIA chair deliver may be arranged via Commissioner Baldwin saving \$200.00 in shipping costs

Gold Star Memorial campaign, chaired by Commissioner Baldwin, raised \$20K

Military Sealift Command Cheatham Annex is providing a 2-ton anchor for Pearl Harbor Memorial.

Memorial sponsored by VVA, with Smyrna Town Council, will be installed at Lake Como for 7

December commemoration service

Coordinating with University of Delaware, Wilmington University, and Delaware Tech student veterans' organizations to conduct a week of giving fundraiser for September

Formed partnership with the Washington Center to provide 10-week internships for 15 Student Veterans of America members

- Pilot program, \$150K/year begins summer 2019

Worked with DE center for Homeless Veterans on submission of 3-year \$500K grant from DOL

9 Aug: Serving on "Warrior to Workplace" panel sponsored by Middletown Development Association at Clarion Hotel Wilmington / 1130

Commissioner Baldwin, General Vavala, Dr. Andrzejewski want to consolidate veterans' student resources into one center in New Castle at Wilmington University, Delaware Tech, or University of Delaware

24 Jul: Presenting a "Principals Perspective on JROTC" seminar in San Diego to 160 retiring Navy and Marine Corps senior enlisted and senior officers

Commissioner Showell (At Large)

1 Jun / 1000: 261st Theater Tactical Signal Brigade Homecoming, Smyrna Readiness Center

Chicks for Charity, supporting the DVTF, will host a fundraising dinner on 18 September

- Specific location and details will become available later

Commissioner Newstadt (At Large)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Seppala (At Large)

27 Apr: Attended Chairman Farley's "Retired Men's" presentation

28 Apr: Attended MOWW Region III Convention at Delaware Military Museum

3 May: Presented JROTC awards to Christiana High School cadets

6 – 12 Aug: National Convention, Columbus GA

Commissioner Lopez (At Large)

19 and 25 Apr, 2 May: Attended DelVets Post 2 Memorial Day planning meetings

- Planning for 28 May event

5 May: Attended National Guard Hall of Fame Ceremony

8 May: Attended Wilmington VAMC VSO meeting

Commissioner Stewart (At Large)

Nothing to report

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

DVTF: Requests 6, Granted 3 (50%), Awarded \$1,518.23 and Balance \$43,410.98

#### **TERM EXPIRATION:**

Lardizzone: 21 October 2018

#### **EVENTS:**

Honoring WW II and Korean War Veterans Ceremony, 25 May / 1400

Bear Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony, Bear Cemetery, 26 May / 1030

Memorial Day Ceremony, Dover Veterans Triangle, 28 May / 1100

Bridge Memorial Day Ceremony, Veterans Park, 30 May / 1030

Millsboro Cemetery Flag Day Ceremony, 14 June / 1000

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

None

#### **ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:**

(Farley) The commissioner (group) photo will be taken during the May meeting

(Farley) Seeking commissioner and veteran service organization interest in hosting a summit for state/departmental leaders

#### **SPECIAL SESSION:**

Commissioner Newstadt announced the Jewish War Veterans (Delaware) are disbanding

- Mentioned single criteria service groups are having difficulty retaining membership

Commissioner Magner announced the MOPH National Veterans Service Officer program is disbanding effective 30 June

Commissioner Lardizzone expressed displeasure to having political "candidates" speak before the commission prior to their election

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, 19 June 2018 at 10:00 AM**

#### **LOCATION:**

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs Conference Room**